

VZCZCXRO9389
OO RUEHGH
DE RUEHUL #1357/01 2360759
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 240759Z AUG 09
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5444
RUCPDO/USDOC WASHDC 9061
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC//DDI/OEA//
RHHMUNA/USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI//FPA//
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC//DB-Z//
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 0208
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 6527
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 6606
RUEHGH/AMCONSUL SHANGHAI 1186
RUEHSH/AMCONSUL SHENYANG 4935
RUEHIN/AIT TAIPEI 3902
RUEHGP/AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE 7109
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1438
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 2754
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1833
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 2441

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 11 SEOUL 001357

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [ECON](#) [KPAO](#) [KS](#) [US](#)
SUBJECT: SEOUL - PRESS BULLETIN; August 24, 2009

TOP HEADLINES

Chosun Ilbo
Kim Jong-il: "Let's Hold Inter-Korean Summit"
President Lee: "N. Korea's Abandonment of Nuclear Weapons Should be Discussed"

JoongAng Ilbo
Kim Jong-il Hopes for Inter-Korean Summit

Dong-a Ilbo, Hankyoreh Shinmun, Segye Ilbo,
Seoul Shinmun, All TVs
Nation Bids Solemn Farewell to
Former President Kim Dae-jung;
He Was Laid to Rest at National Cemetery
after Planting Seeds of Reconciliation and Unity

Hankook Ilbo
[1](#)N. Korean Leader Seeks to Improve Inter-Korean Ties

DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENTS

The nation bid farewell to former President Kim Dae-jung at a state funeral held at the National Assembly yesterday. (All)

An estimated 20,000 mourners, including President Lee Myung-bak and former presidents and delegates from 12 countries, attended the 70-minute service. A 10-member U.S. delegation, led by former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, also took part in the service. (All)

President Lee Myung-bak met yesterday with the North Korean delegation that came to Seoul Friday to pay respects to the late former president. According to Blue House Spokesman Lee Dong-kwan, the North's delegation relayed a verbal message from North Korean leader Kim Jong-il regarding progress in inter-Korean cooperation. (All)

On August 22, chief ROK Delegate to the Six-Party Talks Wi Sung-lac met with Stephen Bosworth, the U.S. Special Representative for North

Korea Policy, who was visiting Seoul as part of the U.S. condolence delegation. A senior ROKG official was quoted: "The ROK and the U.S. have concluded that there has been no change in North Korea's position of rejecting an irreversible denuclearization. The UN sanctions against North Korea will continue for the time being."
(Dong-a, Segye)
(Chosun)

MEDIA ANALYSIS

-Korea Bids Farewell to Late Former President Kim Dae-jung

Yesterday's state funeral for former President Kim Dae-jung received above-the-fold front-page coverage in most ROK media. According to media reports, an estimated 20,000 mourners, including President Lee Myung-bak and former presidents and delegates from 12 countries, attended the 70-minute service. A 10-member U.S. delegation, led by former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, also took part in the service.

Newspapers carried the following headlines: "Citizens Hope Former President's Passing Sows Seeds of Reconciliation and Unity... Citizens Mourn as Funeral Motorcade Passes" (Conservative Chosun Ilbo); "Madeleine Albright, (Former Chinese State Councilor) Tang Jiaxuan and (Former Japanese House of Representatives Speaker) Yohei Kono among Foreign Delegates from 12 Countries" (right-of-center

SEOUL 00001357 002 OF 011

JoongAng Ilbo); and "Former President Kim Laid to Rest at National Cemetery after Planting Seeds of Reconciliation and Unity" (Conservative Dong-a Ilbo)

-N. Korea

Yesterday's meeting between President Lee Myung-bak and the North Korean delegation that came to Seoul Friday to pay respects to the late former president also received wide press coverage. According to media reports, the North's delegation passed on a verbal message from North Korean leader Kim Jong-il that indicated he would like to meet President Lee Myung-bak.

Blue House Spokesman Lee Dong-kwan was widely quoted as saying: "The message was about the need for progress in inter-Korean cooperation and expressed a desire for the two sides to 'solve all issues.'"

Conservative Chosun Ilbo claimed in a front-page report that President Lee told the North Korean delegates that Seoul is willing to talk at any time and at any level-including a summit-but that in order to normalize inter-Korean ties, North Korea should make it clear that it will abandon its nuclear weapons program.

Chosun also quoted a senior presidential official: "The Sunday meeting led to a consensus between the two Koreas on the principle that both sides need high-level government-to-government dialogue. But it remains to be seen when and at what level such dialogue will be held."

Conservative Chosun Ilbo, moderate Hankook Ilbo and OhmyNews, an ROK online newspaper, cited local experts' views on the North Korean delegation's eagerness for contact with ROKG officials as aimed at escaping international sanctions, as well as a strategy to persuade the U.S. through conciliatory gestures toward the ROK.

Newspapers carried the following front-and inside-page headlines: "A Change in the 'Sunshine Paradigm' of Unconditional Aid to N. Korea; ROK Calls for Nuclear Issue to be Addressed First, while N. Korea Demands Economic Cooperation First... Bumpy Road Ahead for Summit Talks" (conservative Chosun Ilbo); "N. Korea's Delegation Starts as Condolence Delegation but Concludes as 'Special Envoy for Kim Jong-il'" (right-of-center JoongAng Ilbo); Lee Myung-bak Administration Sticks to Its Principle on N. Korea... Paradigm Shift in Sight" (conservative Dong-a Ilbo); and "Drastic Change in N. Korea's Attitude... ROKG Busy Understanding N. Korea's Intentions" (moderate Hankook Ilbo).

Conservative Dong-a Ilbo reported on an August 22 meeting in Seoul between Chief ROK Delegate to the Six-Party Talks Wi Sung-lac and Stephen Bosworth, the U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Policy, who was visiting Seoul as part of the U.S. condolence delegation. The report quoted a senior ROKG official as saying: "The ROK and the U.S. have concluded that there has been no change in North Korea's position of rejecting an irreversible denuclearization. The UN sanctions against North Korea will continue for the time being."

Conservative Chosun Ilbo editorialized: "If the ROKG have an inter-Korean summit in mind, its first priority should be to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue. We no longer need an inter-Korean summit that excludes the Korean Peninsula's biggest issue, the North Korean nuclear issue."

Right-of-center JoongAng Ilbo wrote in an editorial: "As long as North Korea threatens the ROK and its neighboring countries with nuclear weapons, there will inevitably be limitations to progress in inter-Korean relations. President Lee explained the ROKG's principles on North Korea policy to Kim Ki-nam, the North's chief delegate, and asked him to convey this message to North Korean leader Kim Jong-il. ... We believe that North Korea has understood the ROK's intention to maintain and develop inter-Korean relations in line with its principles, rather than being bent on just holding talks."

SEOUL 00001357 003 OF 011

Conservative Dong-a Ilbo editorialized: "If North Korean leader Kim Jong-il intends to advance inter-Korean cooperation, he should first remove obstacles to reconciliation. Above all, North Korea should return to the Six-Party Talks and release ROK fishermen detained in the North. Unless North Korea expresses change through action, this meeting (between President Lee and the North Korean delegation) will lose its meaning."

Moderate Hankook Ilbo editorial stated: "... The speed of restoration of inter-Korean ties should inevitably be linked to some progress in the North Korean nuclear dismantlement talks, such as the resumption of the Six-Party Talks. ... The ROK should not only take the initiative in dialogue aimed at resolving inter-Korean relations but also push the North to come to the bargaining table. If necessary, Seoul should actively consider an inter-Korean summit. North Korea, for its part, should abandon its lingering desire to secure nuclear-armed state status and return to the nuclear dismantlement talks as early as possible."

OPINIONS/EDITORIALS

1N. KOREA DOES NOT ACCURATELY UNDERSTAND THE U.S.
(JoongAng Ilbo, August 24, 2009, page 43: EXCERPTS)

By Former Prime Minister Lee Hong-gu

Most U.S. experts believe that the provocative acts that North Korea has conducted since the inauguration of the Obama Administration, such as a nuclear test and missile launches, are not carefully planned diplomatic moves but errors made because the North did not correctly understand President Obama.

It is lucky that North Korea handed over two U.S. journalists it had convicted as criminals to former President Clinton. However, this North Korean decision is not likely to be seen as Kim Jong-il's generous act or a positive sign that it hopes for improvement in North Korea-U.S. relations. Instead, it may serve as an occasion that highlights the regime's immorality of using hostages as a bargaining chip. Since the Obama Administration took office, North Korea has resorted to provocative acts ()with the intention to test the will of President Obama. But apparently these provocative acts were conducted because the North did not fully understand the U.S. frontier spirit and its determination. The western frontier spirit can be seen in a sheriff who, even if held at gunpoint, remains

steadfast. North Korea must have been gravely mistaken if it thought that President Obama would have committed political suicide by easily backing down from North Korean threats and pressure. We hope that diplomatic skirmishes (between North Korea and the U.S.) over the past months will prompt North Korea to rectify its incorrect perceptions of the U.S.

INTER-KOREAN GOVERNMENT-LEVEL TALKS SHOULD LEAD TO NUCLEAR RESOLUTION

(JoongAng Ilbo, August 24, 2009, page 42: EXCERPTS)

In the past, North Korea has argued that its nuclear issue is a matter that only concerns the U.S., not the ROK spurning talks with the ROK. This (attitude), however, only gave the ROK's doves on North Korea little room to maneuver. It also made it difficult for the Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun Administrations to pursue consistent North Korea policies. Few ROK people will buy North Korea's absurd argument (that the nuclear issue has nothing to do with South Korea.) . As long as North Korea threatens the ROK and its neighboring countries with nuclear weapons, there will inevitably be limitations to progress in inter-Korean relations.

President Lee explained the ROKG's principles on North Korea policy to Kim Ki-nam, the North's chief delegate, and asked him to convey this message to North Korean leader Kim Jong-il. The message presumably indicated that the ROK will proactively seek to provide aid to North Korea if there is improvement in the North Korean

SEOUL 00001357 004 OF 011

nuclear issue. We believe that North Korea has understood the ROK's intention to maintain and develop inter-Korean relations in line with its principles, rather than being bent on just holding talks.

WHAT N. KOREAN LEADER KIM SHOULD DO FOR PROGRESS IN INTER-KOREAN COOPERATION

(Dong-a Ilbo, August 24, 2009, Page 31; Excerpts)

If North Korean leader Kim Jong-il intends to advance inter-Korean cooperation, he should first remove obstacles to reconciliation. Above all, North Korea should return to the Six-Party Talks and release ROK fishermen detained in the North. Unless the North expresses change through action, the meeting (between President Lee and the North Korean delegation) will lose its meaning.

The ROKG should not repeat the mistake of the previous two administrations, which accepted North Korea's proposal for a loose form of federated unification and ignored North Korea's nuclear ambitions, the biggest pending issue, during the inter-Korean summits. It has already been proved that the ROK cannot change the North Koreans by providing "unconditional handouts" aimed at preventing their provocations. The ROKG, excited by contact with the North Korean delegation, must ensure that it does not lose its consistency (in its North Korea policy) or cause a crack in international cooperation in pressuring the North to abandon its nuclear ambitions through sanctions.

U.S. KOREA'S RESPONSIBILITY TO MOVE INTER-KOREAN RELATIONS FROM CONFRONTATION TO COOPERATION

(Hankyoreh Shinmun, August 24, 2009, page 31)

President Lee Myung-bak met with the North Korean mourning delegation at the Blue House (the ROK presidential residence) yesterday, and received a verbal message from North Korean leader Kim Jong-il delivered by one of the envoys. In response, President Lee conveyed a message of his own. This was the first indirect contact between the two leaders since the start of the Lee Administration. The high-level meeting the day before between Unification Minister Hyun In-taek and Kim Yang-gon, director of the United Front Department of North Korea's ruling Workers' Party of Korea (WPK), was also a first. It is said that during the two exchanges, inter-Korean relations and pending issues were comprehensively discussed, and the overall mood was good. North

Korea and South Korea now stand at a different starting point to end the deadlock in inter-Korean relations.

North Korea's active intention towards talks is worth noticing. Kim Ki-nam, a secretary of WPK and head of the North Korean mourning delegation, showed a willingness to meet with anyone for the purpose of holding frank discussions, while Kim Yang-gon said he thought inter-Korean relations needed to be improved immediately. Although North Korea's full-scale move towards improving inter-Korean relations might be intended as a tactic for creating a mood conducive to dialogue with the U.S. and out of need for regime stability, how inter-Korean relations are handled ultimately depends on the ROKG's efforts.

The Lee Administration appeared hesitant to meet with the delegation. Government officials had been saying that the purpose of the delegation was nongovernmental and referenced North Korea's initial contact with representatives from the Kim Dae-jung Peace Center. They also said that if North Korea wanted to have government-to-government talks, they should have made direct contact with the ROKG.

This sentiment was indicated by the fact that contact between the North Korean mourning delegation and Lee and Hyun first took the form of courtesy calls. In addition, the meeting with Lee was concluded after only 30 minutes, an insufficient amount of time given the heap of pending inter-Korean issues. These run counter to the sentiment outlined in the presidential address delivered on

SEOUL 00001357 005 OF 011

Independence Day, where Lee said his administration was always ready to resume inter-Korean dialogue and cooperation on all issues, regardless of time and level.

Nonetheless, what is most important is how the situation is handled from this point on. While both sides agree that there must be dialogue, they still greatly differ on direction and substance. First, North Korea must cleanly settle the matter of the detained crew of the ROK fishing boat Yeonan-ho and the Mt. Kumgang tourism issue. Of course, North Korea should not hold inter-Korean relations hostage for some other objective it possesses. It must also sincerely listen to the justified concerns of the international community on several issues.

The ROK government for its part needs to readjust its North Korea policy. The view in certain circles that the ROK's hard-line North Korea policy is leading to changes in North Korea is shortsighted and has no consideration of changes in the geopolitical situation surrounding the peninsula. First, the ROK must escape the trap that has been set by predicating improvement in inter-Korean relations related to the nuclear issue. Inter-Korean relations and the nuclear issue should be part of the same positive cycle, but progress in inter-Korean relations is highly valuable in its own right. Moreover, it must not just engage in rhetoric regarding the October 4 and June 15 statements, and make clear its intention to execute those agreements. In the future, it cannot position the execution of inter-Korean agreements as collateral. The government should be consistent and firm in its principles that it speaks about and not cease in putting them into practice by referring to existing policy.

It is true that even if there are no guarantees, a golden opportunity to improve inter-Korean relations has been presented to North and South Korea, and only proper policy and active realization will bring about positive results. We hope the government bears in mind (the people's) voice in resolving the nuclear issue and that both inter-Korean relations and peace on the Korean peninsula depend on how it leads.

(This is a translation provided by the newspaper, and it is identical to the Korean version.)

EVEN THOUGH A BREAKTHROUGH FOR INTER-KOREAN DIALOGUE HAS BEEN MADE...

(Hankook Ilbo, August 24, 2009, Page 35; Excerpts)

It is too early to anticipate the complete normalization of inter-Korean relations. This is because it is not clear why the North has suddenly veered toward active dialogue, and above all, it is difficult to say whether North Korea is sincere about restoring its relations with the South. This may be the reason why the ROKG did not willingly embrace but took an equivocal attitude toward the North Korean delegation's (about-faced) efforts (for resuming inter-Korean dialogue) and the recent five-point agreement between Hyundai Group and North Korea.

The current situation, where the international community maintains sanctions and pressure on the North, also leaves the ROKG with little wiggle room. The speed of restoration of inter-Korean ties should inevitably be linked to some progress in the North Korean nuclear dismantlement talks, such as the resumption of the Six-Party Talks. It is undesirable, however, for the ROK be dragged along, rather than take a leadership role, in dialogue with the North. The ROK should not only take the initiative in dialogue aimed at resolving inter-Korean relations but also push the North to come to the bargaining table. If necessary, Seoul should actively consider an inter-Korean summit. North Korea, for its part, should abandon its lingering desire to secure nuclear-armed state status and return to the nuclear dismantlement talks as early as possible.

SEOUL MUST NOT WAVER IN THE FACE OF N. KOREAN OVERTURES
(Chosun Ilbo, August 24, 2009, page 35)

SEOUL 00001357 006 OF 011

President Lee Myung-bak on Sunday met a delegation of high-ranking North Korean officials who came to the ROK for the funeral of former president Kim Dae-jung. It was the first time since Lee's inauguration that a meeting with a North Korean official took place at the Blue House (the ROK presidential residence). Lee said, "I hope South and North Korea can cooperate and resolve all our problems" and asked that his administration's "consistent and firm North Korea policy" be conveyed to North Korean leader Kim Jong-il, according to Blue House spokesman Lee Dong-kwan. The North Koreans had also delivered a message from their leader, but the presidential office did not disclose details citing its "sensitivity."

The delegation delivered a message from North Korean leader Kim Jong-il which said, "I want to meet President Lee Myung-bak," a government official said. The president met with Kim Yang-gon, a North Korean Workers' Party director in charge of inter-Korean relations, who traveled to Seoul in s-e-c-r-e-t in September 2007 to fine-tune the preparations for the summit between Kim Jong-il and then president Roh Moo-hyun that year. In his speech on August 15 Liberation Day, Lee said, "Our government is ready to hold dialogue and cooperate with North Korea at any time and at any level about all inter-Korean issues."

Lee is said to have told the North Korean delegation that Pyongyang should involve the ROK in discussing the nuclear issue with the United States, and that this will help resolve it more easily. He called the meeting "the start of a new beginning" in inter-Korean relations and said, "There is no issue the South and the North cannot resolve if they talk with sincerity." Yet Lee also said a "paradigm shift" was necessary in inter-Korean relations based on international principles. In other words, he views inter-Korean relations from an international perspective rather than as a special relationship between the Korean people.

North Korea was sanctioned by the UN Security Council this year for conducting a second nuclear test and launching a series of missiles.

If the international community is to recognize North Korea as a normal state and offer it support, the North must first give up its nuclear program and its missiles. And if Seoul intends to develop relations with the North based on international standards, then it should start by convincing the North to abandon its nuclear weapons and missiles.

The reason previous inter-Korean summits caused so much conflict in the ROK and drew so much concern from the international community

was that they avoided the North Korean nuclear problem. Previous ROK administrations saw inter-Korean summits as their crowning achievement and were reluctant to include such a thorny issue on the agenda for fear of drawing North Korea's ire. If the ROKG has an inter-Korean summit in mind, its first priority should be to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue. We no longer need an inter-Korean summit that excludes the Korean Peninsula's biggest issue, the North Korean nuclear issue.

North Korea's stance has been that the nuclear issue needs to be resolved with the U.S. The North Korean delegation is said to have reiterated that position. Everyone knows that the North is trying to get the upper hand on the peninsula by talking only with Washington and excluding Seoul. But the U.S. cannot guarantee North Korea's survival. Pyongyang may believe that going straight to Washington would prompt the ROK to offer more money and goods to stay in the picture, but that is a miscalculation.

Realistically, the ROK is the only country that can be hit by a North Korean nuclear attack, and it is the only country that can provide vital food and other aid to North Korea. If Lee intends to hold a summit with Kim, he needs to make this very clear to the North Korean leader and let the North revise its survival strategy.

Seoul was active in efforts by the UN Security Council in July to adopt Resolution 1874 and impose fresh sanctions on North Korea, and the international community has been implementing them. On Sunday,

SEOUL 00001357 007 OF 011

when Lee met the North Korean delegation, Philip Goldberg, the U.S. envoy for sanctions against North Korea, arrived in Seoul. His visit sent a clear signal. Seoul must make sure that its relations with Pyongyang do not conflict with the international sanctions.

(This is a translation provided by the newspaper, and it is identical to the Korean version.)

FEATURES

TWELVE NATIONS SEND CONDOLENCE DELEGATION TO KIM'S FUNERAL
(JoongAng Ilbo, August 24, 2009, Page 6; Excerpts)

By Reporters Sun Seung-hye and Kim Min-sang

The U.S. sent a ten-member delegation to the funeral of former President Kim Dae-jung. The delegation was led by former Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, who had previously met with North Korean leader Kim Jong-il in Pyongyang right after the inter-Korean summit in October 2000. (Shortly thereafter, she also met with former ROK President Kim.) (During her visit to North Korea,) she helped create a conciliatory mood between the two Koreas in the final days of the Clinton Administration.

Former U.S. Ambassador to the ROK Donald P. Gregg, who was also a part of the delegation, had a deep relationship with the late President. When former President Kim was sentenced to death by the new ROK military authorities in 1980, Gregg reportedly delivered the U.S.'s opposition to then-ROK President Chun Doo-hwan. In his capacity as Chairman of the Korea Society, Gregg also visited Severance Hospital of Yonsei University to comfort Lee Hee-ho, wife of the former President, on August 13.

Also on the list of the delegation were U.S. Ambassador to the ROK Kathleen Stephens and her predecessors James Laney and Thomas C. Hubbard, and Korean-American Harold Koh (Korean name Koh Hong-ju), the Legal Advisor of the U.S. Department of State.

(Editor's Note: This same story has also been carried by other newspapers. The Dong-a Ilbo reported: "The U.S. delegation, made up of ten prominent pro-ROK figures, arrived in Osan on a U.S. military plane on August 22, a day before the funeral. The delegation included a number of former U.S. officials who were in charge of foreign policy toward the ROK." The Chosun Ilbo reported: "During

the meeting with ROK President Lee Myung-bak, former Secretary Albright said, 'Not only Koreans but also people in Northeast Asia and around the world share grief. Members of the delegation who attended here had ties with former President Kim, and U.S. President Barack Obama sent the delegation.' Former Secretary Albright, along with U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Policy Stephen Bosworth, met with ROK Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan for a breakfast meeting on August 23 and discussed the North Korean nuclear issue." The Hankyoreh Shinmun reported: "After laying a wreath, former Secretary Albright put both hands together and expressed her condolences to the bereaved family. Former U.S. Ambassador to the ROK Donald P. Gregg, who, as the CIA's Seoul Bureau Chief, spearheaded an effort to save former President Kim when he was abducted in Tokyo in 1973, also bowed before Kim's portrait." The Hankook Ilbo reported: "Former U.S. Ambassador to the ROK James Laney played a role in realizing former U.S. President Jimmy Carter's visit to the North during the first North Korean nuclear crisis in 1994.")

NORTH ENVOYS MEET WITH LEE FOR FIRST TIME
(JoongAng Daily, August 24, 2009, page)

By Reporter Yoo Jee-ho

Blue House stresses need for dialogue in resolving inter-Korean tensions

SEOUL 00001357 008 OF 011

ROK President Lee Myung-bak yesterday met with the North Korean delegation, which came to Seoul Friday to pay respects to the late, former ROK President Kim Dae-jung, to exchange views on the future of inter-Korean relations.

It was the first time Lee had come in direct contact with North Korean officials since he took office in February of last year.

Blue House spokesman Lee Dong-kwan said the meeting started at 9 a.m., an hour earlier than scheduled, and lasted for 30 minutes. The North Korean delegation relayed a verbal message from the North Korean leader Kim Jong-il "regarding progress in inter-Korean cooperation."

The Blue House didn't disclose the detailed content of Kim's message, citing its sensitivity. But a source told the JoongAng Ilbo that a North Korean official said on Saturday that Kim Jong-il wants to hold a summit with Lee Myung-bak.

According to the source, Kim Yang-gon, a senior Workers' Party official, said Saturday that an inter-Korean summit would be necessary to resolve problems facing the two Koreas.

"We'd like to tell President Lee about Kim Jong-il's wishes for a third inter-Korean summit," Kim said, according to the source. The two previous summits were held in 2000 and 2007. "If we miss this opportunity, it would be difficult to create another chance."

In yesterday's meeting, Lee said the ROK president insisted on Seoul's "consistent and steadfast principles" on Pyongyang and asked the North Korean officials to convey this message back to Kim.

According to the spokesman, Lee Myung-bak also thanked the North Korea officials for their visit and said the Koreas can resolve any problems through dialogue if they approach them with sincerity. Lee Dong-kwan called the mood at the meeting "serious and calm."

Lee Myung-bak received other delegations that flew in to extend their condolences for Kim, who died last Tuesday at age 85. Lee was accompanied by Unification Minister Hyun In-taek and Blue House senior foreign affairs secretary Kim Sung-hwan. North Korea was represented by Kim Ki-nam, a senior secretary for the ruling Workers' Party, Kim Yang-gon, an influential figure on inter-Korean affairs at the Workers' Party, and Won Tong-yon, an official with the Asia-Pacific Peace Committee, which handles inter-Korean businesses.

When asked if this meeting would be a turning point in inter-Korean relations, an official at the Blue House cautioned that "there's no need to get ahead of ourselves."

"As President Lee said, there's nothing we can't resolve through dialogue," the official said. "But we can't do this work alone. We have to have a counterpart here."

"The North-South relationship is a special one because we are, after all, one people," the official continued. "But we have to look past that and develop a relationship that is internationally acceptable and appropriate in order to take the next step."

The official added that President Lee and the visiting North Koreans hadn't discussed the fate of the four ROK fishermen detained in the North. The fishermen were captured by the North Koreans on July 30, when their fishing boat crossed the maritime border after their satellite navigation system malfunctioned.

The meeting came about after North Korean officials told Unification Minister Hyun on Saturday that they had a message from Kim Jong-il to deliver to the Blue House.

Initially, however, the ROK presidential office was lukewarm to the suggestion. A government official said late Saturday afternoon that "it was going to be difficult" to arrange the meeting between Lee and the North Koreans on Saturday.

SEOUL 00001357 009 OF 011

The delegation was scheduled to depart for Pyongyang at 2 p.m. on Saturday but instead left at 12:10 p.m. yesterday. North Korean officials met with ROK counterparts throughout Saturday.

So far in August, there have been indications that deteriorated relations will improve.

Earlier this month, Hyun Jeong-eun, chairwoman of Hyundai Group, paid a visit to Kim Jong-il in Pyongyang and secured the release of a detained ROK worker.

Following that encounter, Asia-Pacific Peace Committee and Hyundai Group agreed to resume suspended tourism programs to Mt. Kumgang and to arrange reunions for Korean families in the fall.

The ROK proposed talks this week with the North to discuss setting up reunions before Chuseok, Korea's Thanksgiving, on October 3. No inter-Korean family reunions have taken place since 2007.

STATE FUNERAL HELD FOR FORMER PRES. KIM DJ
(Dong-a Ilbo, August 24, 2009, Front page)

By Reporters Cho Soo-jin and Shin Min-gi

The state funeral for former President Kim Dae-jung was held yesterday at a plaza in front of the National Assembly in Seoul's Yeouido district.

President Lee Myung-bak and First Lady Kim Yoon-ok, former Presidents Kim Young-sam and Chun Doo-hwan, domestic politicians and foreign delegates from 11 countries attended the ceremony.

The foreign delegates included former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, former Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan, and former Japanese House of Representatives Speaker Yohei Kono.

In Korea's largest state funeral in history attended by more than 24,000 people, Prime Minister Han Seung-soo offered the eulogy. Religious services and floral tributes followed.

Following the funeral, the motorcade carrying the body of the late president headed for Seoul National Cemetery in the city's southern region, passing through Seoul Plaza and Seoul Station. It also dropped by Kim Dae-jung's home in Seoul's Donggyo district and the Kim Dae Jung Peace Center.

When the motorcade passed Seoul Plaza, the late president's widow Lee Hee-ho got out of her car and told mourners, "My husband sincerely wants you all to pursue reconciliation and forgiveness, the values my husband cherished for life, and love, peace and care for the underprivileged. This is my husband's will."

President Lee met the foreign delegates attending the funeral.

Deputy presidential spokeswoman Kim Eun-hye quoted him as saying, "Former President Kim devoted his entire life to promote democracy and improve inter-Korean relations," adding, "I thank you all for coming here to pay tribute to the late president."

After the burial ceremony, tens of thousands of people visited Seoul Plaza and the National Assembly, where altars were set up, to pay their respects to the late former President Kim Dae-jung. No anti-government demonstrations occurred, however.

With fairness questioned in the process of deciding on a state funeral for him, the government will face pressure to come up with clear principles and standards on if a former president gets a state or people's funeral.

According to the state funeral preparation committee, more than 600,000 people visited 182 altars nationwide to bid farewell to the late president Tuesday through yesterday.

SEOUL 00001357 010 OF 011

The six-day official mourning period provided a rare opportunity for national unity and inter-Korean reconciliation. This has led to hope that Kim Dae-jung's death will pave the way for resolution of geographical, ideological, class, and factional conflicts and confrontations.

Politicians also say his death will help warm relations between the ruling and opposition parties, which have soured since the ruling Grand National Party railroaded media reform bills through parliament last month.

The ruling party will reportedly urge the main opposition Democratic Party to return to parliament without precondition to discuss pending issues, including those related to the people's livelihood.

For its part, the Democratic Party, which has boycotted the National Assembly in protest of the passage of the media bills, is expected to decide its course of action after gathering opinions from its members.

(This is a translation provided by the newspaper, and it is identical to the Korean version.)

EXPERTS URGE CAUTION OVER FRIENDLY SIGNS FROM N. KOREA
(Chosun Ilbo, August 24, 2009, page 4: EXCERPTS)

By Reporter Choi Gyeong-un

North Korea's sudden charm offensive has met with a cautious welcome from experts but also calls for a careful analysis of the North's intentions and tactics. On Sunday, President Lee Myung-bak, in the first high-level inter-Korean meeting of his presidency, spoke with a delegation from North Korea who was in the ROK to attend the funeral of former President Kim Dae-jung. The delegation also met separately with Unification Minister Hyun In-taek.

"It's a positive signal," said a researcher at a state-run think tank. "But it seems highly likely that it's part of a tactic by North Korea to get out of the corner it has been driven into by international sanctions" imposed over its latest nuclear test.

Prof. Yoo Ho-yeol of Korea University also welcomed "the momentum to break the deadlock" in inter-Korean relations, including the possibility of official government-level talks, given that the North

Koreans delivered a message from Kim Jong-il acting as de facto special envoys to President Lee Myung-bak.

But Suh Jae-jean, the president of the Korea Institute for National Unification, warned the visit was "a tactic to persuade the U.S. by creating a conciliatory inter-Korean atmosphere at a time when the international community is enforcing sanctions."

Prof. Nam Joo-hong of Kyonggi University said the North may be attempting to create a sense of nostalgia in the ROK for Kim Dae-jung's "Sunshine Policy" of unconditional engagement with the North at a time when international sanctions are biting.

Experts advise the government to proceed slowly depending on what North Korea does next, especially watching whether its position on denuclearization improves, whether the crew of the ROK fishing boat 800 Yeonan, who were towed to the North, are released swiftly, and whether the North finally apologizes for the fatal shooting of an ROK tourist at Mt. Kumgang in 2008.

Prof. Kim Sung-han of Korea University said improvements in relations "should be sought in such a way as to find a solution to the nuclear issue. The government should maintain certain principles in terms of denuclearization" in devising its policy.

Experts also agreed that cooperation between Seoul and Washington is vital. "Improvements in inter-Korean relations should be sought within the framework of joint ROK-U.S. efforts to persuade the North

SEOUL 00001357 011 OF 011

to abandon its nuclear weapons and return as a regular member of the international community," Suh said. "An emotional approach to such issues that ignores this principle would only mean falling for North Korea's tactics."

(This is a translation provided by the newspaper, and it is identical to the Korean version.)

INTER-KOREAN TALKS HINT AT 'PARADIGM SHIFT' IN TIES
(Chosun Ilbo, August 24, 2009, page 4: EXCERPTS)

By Reporter Ahn Yong-hyun

A senior ROK official on Sunday spoke of a "paradigm shift" in inter-Korean relations after President Lee Myung-bak met a senior North Korean delegation that extended its stay after paying respects to the late former President Kim Dae-jung.

The Lee Administration has charted a different course in North Korea policy compared to the previous two administrations under Kim and Roh Moo-hyun and intends to continue that way. "The previous administrations put priority on the exceptional nature of the inter-Korean relations and put the rules of normal international relations aside," he said. "They were grateful when North Korea just responded to requests for dialogue. That will no longer happen."

The remarks show that the Lee Administration is determined to stick to principles in trying to persuade North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons program. The fact that Lee said he would be willing to hold a summit if it can help denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula supports this view.

The "paradigm shift" was evident in the run-up to the meeting. Seoul did not make it easy for the North Koreans to meet Lee after the North had initially informed them-not the ROKG but a private channel, the Kim Dae Jung Peace Center-that the delegation was coming. Seoul insisted that the North use official government channels.

And although Kim Yang-gon, the director of the North's United Front Department, said he came with a message from North Korean leader Kim Jong-il, Seoul did not jump to arrange a visit to the Blue House, and the North Korean delegates had to postpone their return and stay in Seoul for another day.

During the last two administrations, senior North Korean high ranking officials met the ROK president eight times, and they never had to wait. Lee Jo-won, professor in politics and diplomacy at ChungAng University, said, "The key point is the reaction from North Korea to the changes in the ROKG."

(This is a translation provided by the newspaper, and it is identical to the Korean version.)

TOKOLA